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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 ADDIS ABABA 000703

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STATE FOR AF/SPG, D, IO/PSC
PARIS: PLEASE PASS TO AMB. RANNEBERGER

E.O. 12958: DECL: 03/09/2016
TAGS: [KPKO](#) [NATO](#) [PREL](#) [SF](#) [SU](#) [AU](#)
SUBJECT: AMIS RE-HAT: SOUTH AFRICAN PERMREP SUGGESTS
DECISION MAY OCCUR AFTER MARCH 10

REF: A. STATE 036548

[1](#)B. PRETORIA 977 (NOTAL)

Classified By: CHARGE D'AFFAIRES, A.I. JANET WILGUS. REASON: 1.4 (D).

[1](#)1. (C) SUMMARY. South Africa's ambassador and permanent representative to the AU Baso Sangqu notes that the January 10 Peace and Security Council meeting endorsed the transition of AMIS to a UN operation "in principle." As a member of both the AU and the UN, and as a troop-contributing country, South Africa sees "no inherent contradiction" between the two organizations, but recognizes that consultations are required to address outstanding "modalities." Amb. Sangqu said South Africa appreciates the role the United States is playing in Sudan, but asked that the USG consider whether it could "open the door" for further engagement and consultations. Amb. Sangqu's remarks echo those of other PSC members that suggest that a decision on AMIS transition to a UN operation may not be finalized by March 10. END SUMMARY.

[1](#)2. (C) Charge, accompanied by deputy pol/econ counselor, presented ref A points on March 9 to South African PermRep to the African Union Amb. Baso Sangqu and First Secretary for Peace and Security Fefe Dwabayo. Charge highlighted the need for a clear decision to be made on the future of the AU Mission in Sudan (AMIS) at the March 10 AU Peace and Security Council (PSC) meeting, as AMIS had been originally envisioned as a rapid reaction force, not a long-term peace-keeping operation. It was important for transition to occur expediently, before the situation in Darfur deteriorated further; while the USG recognized the accomplishments of AMIS, a more experienced peace-keeping operation with a stronger mandate was needed. Such a force could even assist the GNU address false accusations of culpability for attacks. While Sudan had expressed reservations about UN and NATO forces, both were already playing a role in Sudan, e.g., providing training and airlift. Charge noted that the USG sought to ensure that the mission retain its African character, and did not oppose having the mission be led by an African force commander. Defining an "end state" for AMIS would also enhance the ability of the United States to fund AMIS, she added.

[1](#)3. (C) South Africa was approaching the March 10 PSC meeting with "a high sense of responsibility," Amb. Sangqu said. Foreign Minister Zuma would lead South Africa's delegation, as President Mbeki was in Portugal. Amb. Sangqu said he had met on the previous day with Ethiopian MFA Africa Affairs

Director Amb. Konjit, and earlier in the day with Sudan's charge. The January 12 PSC had discussed strengths and weaknesses of AMIS outlined by the Joint Assessment team, and had asked the AU to contact the UN to work out the appropriate "modalities" for transition. There was consensus that transition would require nine months, but further discussions were needed to work out such modalities, Sangqu said. No decision had been made yet on whether a strengthened mission should be mandated under Chapter VI or VII (peace-keeping vs. peace enforcement) of the UN Charter, he said. The AU Permanent Representatives Committee had wisely recommended the such decisions be made at the ministerial level, he said.

"NO INHERENT CONTRADICTION" BETWEEN AU AND UN

14. (C) As a member of both the AU and the UN, South Africa saw "no inherent contradiction" between the two organizations, but believed that the (African) "character of the force must be maintained." Citing the example of AMIB's transition to ONUB in Burundi, Sangqu said that South Africa did not view the UN taking over from AMIS as a "failure for Africa," but recognized the need to manage the political nature of such a transition. He noted that a UN team had met with AU Peace and Security Commissioner Said Djinnit and representatives of troop-contributing countries (including South Africa). A UN delegation had also traveled to South Africa, making it "clear that the UN wants to move in this direction." Noting that he had been involved in drafting the communique issued at the January 12 PSC, which had expressed support "in principle" for a transition from AMIS to a UN operation, Amb. Sangqu underscored the importance of properly

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"formulating" any decision issued by the PSC.

APPEAL FOR USG TO "OPEN DOOR" FOR FURTHER CONSULTATIONS

15. (C) South Africa recognized the importance of donor views, especially since "major resources" for AMIS came from outside Africa. On the other hand, one needed to contribute to a positive solution, not advocate "hard-core positions." "The long and short of it is that it is very difficult to say what will be the outcome of the meeting," Amb. Sangqu said. While South Africa appreciated the role the United States had played in raising the international profile of the situation in Sudan, the United States needed to "open the door for further engagement" and recognize "realities on the ground," Amb. Sangqu said. He explained that South Africa was "not necessarily tied" to March 10 "as an end date," and that additional consultations for one to two weeks may be required. He stressed the importance of including Sudan as a partner, rather than an opponent, in the process: "We would not wish to leave out Sudan in a solution, so it may take time." Timeliness depended on how fast the AU could resolve such issues, he said. Sangqu questioned what the United States would do if no clear decision were reached on March 10. Charge responded that as the USG was committed to finding a solution and to protecting the people of Darfur, it sought an expedient decision.

16. (C) Noting that the Abuja peace talks had "not yielded satisfactory results," Amb. Sangqu said that Sudan's charge had earlier raised the GNU's concern that the Abuja talks not be jeopardized. According to Sudan, he said, rebels had taken a "lackluster stance," awaiting the arrival of a new international force.

17. (C) In a separate meeting on March 9 with Charge, UK DCM observed that the UK had identified South Africa as a key player in the AMIS re-hat decision and that London had been advised to contact South African FM Zuma.

